

A  
**TRAGI-COMICAL FARCE;**

OR, THE

**DEAD ALIVE AGAIN.**

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

**THE AGREEABLE SEPARATION.**

**COMIC ENTERTAINMENT.**

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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### MEN

Spare-ribs,  
Agriculture,  
Clodpole,  
Adze,

A Parson ;  
A Farmer ;  
His Servant ;  
An Undertaker.

### WOMEN.

Mrs Spare-ribs,      The Parson's Wife.  
Miss More, alias Clark,      The Parson's Concubine.



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A  
TRAGI-COMICAL FARCE;  
OR, THE  
DEAD ALIVE AGAIN.

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A C T I.

SCENE I. The Farmer's House.

*Enter Spare-ribs and Agriculture.*

SPARE-RIBS.

**Y**OUR most obedient humble servant, Mr Agriculture; how do you do this morning?

*Agriculture.* I'm glad to see you, Parson. What news, foreign or domestic?

*Spare.* Dismal! oh very dismal news, indeed! Oh! I am the most unfortunate, the most wretched of all wretched beings!—P'm undone! alas! alas!

*Agri.* Undone, Sir! Pray what unfortunate breeze has disturbed your peace of mind, or agitated your system in this extraordinary manner?

*Spare.* My wife,—my dearest, sweetest wife,—the most amiable of women!

*Agri.* Your wife! and what of her?—Is she brought to bed of a young parson?

*Spare.* Oh! the amiable woman!—but you had not the honour of her acquaintance, she's gone, alas! I'm undone without a remedy!

*Agri.* Have patience, my dear Parson, bear it like a Christian.—She has paid the debt of nature.—Our accounts will be called for soon.

*Spare.* But then, Sir, you little know how amiable a woman she was. She was virtuous, benevolent, tender hearted. Oh! she was—but were I to recapitulate all her virtues, the sun would be depressed below the Western horizon 'ere I had *half* done.—Then, Sir, feeling to the last?—Aye to the very last, Mr Agriculture.

*Agri.* You must moderate your passions, my good Sir, and meet affliction with becoming fortitude—Did she die suddenly?—has she settled her affairs?

*Spare.* There she behaved like a person of honour, of true taste, of discernment, oh God! what an amiable woman have I lost!—She has left me sole heir and executor.—Oh my friend! I shall never forget her!

*Agri.* I think I have heard you say, that she had property to a considerable amount.

*Spare.* Oh! considerable property! considerable property! when she and I used to have our *fricars*, she would threaten to leave it past me—but I knew her to be an affectionate creature.

*Agri.* Have you *any* friend, in London, who can settle the business with propriety and honesty?

*Spare.* That is the very thing which brought me here.—Indeed that is my whole business at present—My dear friend, I want your advice.—This pericranium of mine is full of sorrow, distrust, scheme, doubts, and fears.



*Agri.* To be sure it is a trying situation, but it is necessary to look after the effects; you know, they are the tokens of your *former* love and amity, and will be lasting mementoes of that *conjugal* felicity you ever enjoyed.

*Spare.* Oh! thou most excellent of all orators, that speakest from the heart to the heart of thy *attentive* hearer. I must employ an attorney—but such knaves! I may be bilked of all!

*Agri.* Employ another as a *check* upon the first.

*Spare.* A confounded good thought!—forgive me my sins!—but they may be *both* rogues!

*Agri.* Right, they may be so indeed; you cannot be too circumspect; have you not *one* acquaintance that can be trusted?

*Spare.* Oh Lord!—I have it!—An old lady of *candeur*, I believe, that will do the business *swing-*ingly.

*Agri.* And should she too have a leaky bottom, my wife's mother will be a check upon all.

*Spare.* Let me embrace thee, my dearest friend, what could be done without thy safe counsel!—Adieu, for the present, I shall put the whole in motion immediately, and next time you see me, you will see me.—

*Agri.* Better reconciled to your situation perhaps. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

### AGRICULTURE *solus.*

A strange creature this! His head turns round, his tongue falters, he is all mistrust! for what? why, for fear his wife, his *dear*, his *amiable* wife.

should *not* be dead; not because she is dead, for this letter of his rather leaves him in the dark, I think; yet this same Parson does not want for *parts*, no more than he wants for *feeling*. He seems to be very much affected with the loss of his wife, and as his affliction seems to be real, faith I *almost* pity the poor devil.—But he is gone about his business, nor must mine be neglected.—Yo-ho! Clodpole, come hither my lad.

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### SCENE III.

*Enter Clodpole.*

*Agri.* Well Clodpole, is the ship arrived, that was to bring the egg-chests, &c. what news? Eh! —Speak firrah.

*Clodpole.* (*Scratching his ears*) News! wey be ma faith maister, I hear na news. 'cept that Mrs Spare-ribs has arrived, after a wery favourable passage—that's all.

*Agri.* Mrs Spare-ribs arrived! O thou blundering rascal.—The late Parson appeared to you after his death, and will the wife of the present incumbent fare no better?—What! have they brought her corpse here?—Hey day! pretty work indeed!—I shall write the Parson.—Get a horse ready immediately. *[Exit Clodpole.]*

*[Scene changes to another apartment, and discovers Agriculture reading, and Clodpole listening.]*

*Reverend Sir,*

I am sorry to inform you, that your wife's bodily remains are arrived at ———, and ought to be

interred with all possible speed, as they have been too long kept already,

Your's sincerely,

AGRICULTURE.

*To him Clodpole.*

I am ready Maister.

*Agriculture.* (*Giving him the letter*) Be as active as possible then, and carry that letter to Mr Spare-ribs.

*Clod.* Aye, aye, that I shall,—Bassy shall pay for that, I's warren ye.—(*As he goes out*) Het remains wants to be entered, else they might be seizable. Lord what queer wark. [*Exeunt.*]

## A C T II.

### SCENE I. The Parsonage.

*Enter Clodpole.*

**I** THINKS that be the Parson's door. (*raps*)

*To him Miss More.*

*Clod.* Your servant meistrifs lady, is the Parson at whoame with your reverence?

*Miss More.* And if he were at whoame, what does your irreverence want with him? (*squeakingly*)

*Clod.* Nay I wants nothing—his wife's arrived—that's all, and wants to be entered at the Custom-house.—This paper will tell ye the rest on't; and how she'll be 'terred as maister was saying.—Your servant lady meistrifs.

*Miss More.* Mrs Spare-ribs!—the devil's in the man!—She is dead and rotten, thank God!

*Clod.* Not so dead as you imagine, mistress, ha! ha! ha! nor so rotten as you would have her. —But let the paper speak for himself. Your servant. [Exit]

*Enter Spare-ribs.*

Pray Sally, my dear, what flutters you so much? Your whole frame is agitated and convulsed.—What's the matter?

*Miss More* Read that Parson, (*giving him the letter*) and you'll be in the same predicament I am afraid.

*Spare ribs reads.*

I am sorry to inform you. that your wife's bodily remains are arrived at ———, and ought to be interred with all possible speed, as they have been too long kept already,

Your's sincerely,

AGRICULTURE.

(*Lets fall the letter*) Heavens above all! I am the most unfortunate of all unfortunates!—continually disappointed, thwarted, crossed, cajoled, and cozened, by that jade, Dame Fortune, as the poets call her.—Could they not have buried her where she died, and be damned to them?

*Miss More.* Misfortunes will come whether one will or not, Parson.—But you can bury her upon very moderate terms.

*Spare.* Terms! confounded terms indeed, my dear.—This is an unfortunate disaster.—What terms, my girl?

*Miss More.* Bargain with an undertaker.—Lord, Parson, have you been so long in London, and do not know these useful men.—If one get a *bad* husband, or a *worse* wife out of the way, by any means, these officious souls will do the rest of the business with dexterity.



*Spare.* Oh! I know undertakers well!—Between you and me, 'tis not the first time they have done me a *good* turn.—But this illiterate, unsociable country, peopled with two-legged animals, has no person arch enough in it to employ in such a case.

*Miss More.* Never puzzle your brain about that—I'll send you a man for the purpose in a moment.—Peggy, go bring Mr Adze the undertaker here.

*Spare.* And in the mean time I'll send for some mournings, and inform my good friends at \_\_\_\_\_ of the loss of my dear wife. [Exeunt.]

## SCENE II.

*Enter Spare-ribs, reading.*

*To the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Reverend Sir,*

I have the misfortune to inform you, that my amiable spouse departed this life about a week ago.—My hand can scarcely hold the pen, my mind is so agitated with the recent loss.—Words cannot paint the virtuous qualifications of that adorable creature.—Come then expressible silence, and close the dreary scene. Let my other friends know my misfortune, so that they may commiserate with my loss, and shed the mutual tear.—As I propose, at some future period, to sell the houses you were so kind as to draw the rents of, for my dear wife, I hope, till then, you will no less oblige (by the same friendly office) your afflicted friend,

SPARE-RIBS.

P. S. She has left me heir of all—I shall never forget her.

This is a good dose of mournings—I must next finish my letters to my attornies.

*Enter Miss More.*

Parson, here is the undertaker, Mr Adze.

*Spare-ribs, from his study.* Thunder and lightning, the devil! how I'm interrupted.

*Miss More.* The Undertaker, good Mr Parson.

*Spare.* Oh yes! I shall speak to him immediately—Walk in Mr Adze. How do you do Mr Adze, how do you do?

*Adze.* Very well, Sir; pray what are your demands with me?

*Spare.* Demands! I've no demands. I want you to do a small job for me—My amiable wife died at London, where she ought to have been buried—but by some mistake or other they have sent her here—Can you bury her Mr Adze?

*Adze.* I can make a coffin, and the Sexton can bury her.

*Spare.* Confound your stupidity! what will you take for the whole job, done in as frugal a manner as possible?

*Adze.* I never did any thing in that way, so do not well know how to bargain for the whole job.

*Spare.* Oh stiff necked generation! will you never be driven out of the beaten aukward track, ambled in by your ancestors—Bury her any how, and you shall have five shillings.

*Adze.* Five shillings! five shillings is too little. I could not bury her decently under one guinea.

*Spare.* Hang decency! Hugger mugger her any way you rogue.

[*Mrs Spare-ribs opens the parlour door—walks in, and sits down without speaking.*]

*Spare.* (*Looking about sees his wife*) Mercy on me!—Gods!—No!—Yes!—Heavens! What do I see?—my wife!—no! avaunt! stand off! never did I believe in gods, devils, ghosts, nor apparitions, till now!!! Keep off! keep off! I say!! in the name of —. Ah Miss More, I am strangely agitated! a little *beaume de vie*!—I faint! —I'm gone!—Quick! this is too much, indeed, indeed!  
(*faints*)

[*Miss More comes running in; starts back at the sight of a woman in the parlour.—The Undertaker sneaks off, and leaves Mrs Spare-ribs to survey her husband in a fit.*]

*Spare.* (*recovering*) Oh! (*sighs*) am I dreaming, in a trance; or—where am I?

*Mrs Spare.* (*mimicking him*) Am I dreaming, in a trance; or—where am I?

*Miss More.* What unmannerly huffy are you to insult a gentleman in his own house, and in such a terrible situation?

*Mrs Spare.* And what base strumpet are you, with your prominent belly, to insult that gentleman's wife?—Come, cheer up, Parson, and welcome me home.

*Miss More.* Heavens! is the *Dead* alive again? then all our secret amours are at an end. (*aside*)

*Mrs Spare.* Begone strumpet! leave us to ourselves.

[*Miss retires; Mrs Spare-ribs takes up Agriculture's letter and reads it, whilst Spare-ribs recollects himself a little.*]

*Mrs Spare.* Now, Mr Parson, are you reconciled to the bodily remains of your wife, after this prodigious fright? Why don't you get them interred? They have been kept too long!—Yes, my amiable spouse, and I hope they will be still kept longer, to——

*Spare-ribs (rising)* To bless my future days, and that I may have it in my power to testify, to shew you that I live only——

*Mrs Spare.* To make my life still more miserable. Ah! if I may judge by the present ocular demonstration, you lead your life much in the *old* style, although your style be at present *new*. Ah villain! happy would you have been, had the contents of this letter been true. Ah! ungrateful monster!

*Spare.* (*saluting his wife*) My dearest wife, words cannot express the pleasure I feel on seeing you here—My head turns round with joy—with confusion at your resurrection—I was just preparing for London, on purpose to pay my last devoirs to your remains—This has interrupted me indeed!

*Mrs Spare.* Now as you are so joyful, so confounded, so surprised, so disappointed at my resurrection, which your own eyes have evidenced, (a thing you never verily believed in before) I hope you do not intend to take a journey so *disagreeable*?

*Spare.* That does not alter my intention in the least. The *London* business cannot be deferred. I have settled all my *parish* business, and shall write my friends at —— of your safe and welcome arrival.——

*Mrs Spare.* Who, I make no doubt, will be very glad to hear of my *safe*, and at the same time be very much surprised to hear of my welcome arrival.

*Exit.*



*Spare-ribs writes.*

*Dear Sir,*

In my last I mentioned the death of my wife ;  
but as this is the land of ghosts and apparitions,  
since that time a very disagreeable one has appear-  
ed, and continually haunts me. I am now on my  
way to London, to be out of the reach of such de-  
testable company,

Yours, &c.

SPARE-RIBS.

*To the Rev. ———, at ———.*



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**THE**

**AGREEABLE SEPARATION.**

**COMIC ENTERTAINMENT.**

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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### MEN.

|                  |                        |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Spare-ribs,      | A Parson ;             |
| Ronald M'Donald, | A Scotchman ;          |
| Mr Punctual,     | A Publican ;           |
| Cringe,          | His Waiter ;           |
| Scum,            | Servant to Spare-ribs. |
| Cutbeard,        | A Barber.              |

### WOMAN.

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Mrs Spare-ribs, | The Parson's Wife. |
|-----------------|--------------------|



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THE  
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A C T I.

SCENE I. The Parsonage.

SPARE-RIBS AND SCUM.

*Spare-ribs.*

AS I have an affair of importance to transact just now, and must do it partly by your means, can you tell a story, my good lad, Scum?

*Scum.* Trust me for that, Sir; do ye hear me maister, if it be to serve you, I will tell a story that shall bamboozle all the knaves in Chrysten-dom to match it, (*aside*) though he never so much as thanked me for the last story I told on his account—when I assured my mistress that he was gone to visit Mr —, when he was along with

Mifs —, but a silent tongue makes a wise head, as he himself once told me. Lord, what wise stories fools will tell betimes!—but mum.

*Spare.* You know, Scum, that your worthy mistress, and my dear wife, poor woman, not being accustomed to live in such a solitary place as this, hath been melancholic ever since she came here—

*Scum.* O lud! O lud! ill o' cholic ever since she came here!—then, maister, she cannot live long, for my mother, Sir, died of it in less than four days, and—

*Spare.* Confound thy insolence, thou varlet, thus to interrupt me! will that infernal tongue of thine never learn to be silent? another word for thy life! (*offers to kick him*) Didst thou not hear me say mel—ancholic, Sir?—

*Scum.* O maister! maister! I am done, I am done.

*Spare.* And as she has thus become a prey to melancholy, Sir, her desire is to go and reside in —; therefore, thou varlet, thou must go to the posthouse immediately, and tell Mr Punctual to send here directly two of his most trusty horses, his best carriage, a methodical driver, and with all these, tell him to be sure to send a large quantity of straps, ropes, &c. In all affairs of importance, regularity and a properly adapted scheme, is absolutely necessary. I am a great lover of method, thou insignificant; nothing like method to me.—

*Scum.* Nor to me neither, maister, I love them too; they are good peoples—

*Spare.* Damn thy impudence! is thy tongue—

*Scum.* Maister, maister, I'll not do it again.

*Spare.* Now, thou rascal, thou hast thy message, fly like lightning, and tell Punctual distinctly what I have related to thee, and one blunder for thy life!

*Scum.* Yes, yes, maister, I'll fly *swifter* than lightning. *Exit.*

*Spare.* But, stop, stop, thou son of a —, till I bring thee a letter to carry to Mr —, my worthy friend.  
(*He goes away for the letter*)

*Scum, solus.*

*Scum.* And tell him to send a large quantity of straps and ropes ! The Lord have mercy on us and deliver us from evil ! by St Gingo he is going to hang her :—A cure for the cholic indeed ! O the wretch ! the wretch ! Happy would he be, as the folks say, to have her in heaven ; and were it not for fear of being hang'd, he would have sent her there long ago ; but though he was once in the army, he was no soldier ; his own shadow in a moonlight night would, as the folks say, give him, at least, a severe fit of the ague.—As I have a regard for my mistress, I certainly will go and tell her what he has sent me to do, that she may take care of herself ;—but stay, if he know that I told her, by St Mumpsimus, he will be along side of me and make me suffer for all ; and then where is my profit ?—No, no, a silent tongue makes a wise head—it is man, mind yourself : If he should both hang and drown her, what is that to me ?

*Enter Spare-ribs, with a letter.*

*Spare.* Here, Sir, carry that to Mr —.

*Scum.* Yes, maister.

*Exit.*

*Spare-ribs, solus.*

*Spare.* Oh, Fortune ! Fortune ! how dismal are thy frowns ! thy smiles are pleasure, happiness, ecstasy, but thy frowns are death ! Like a ball I am tossed, now high, now low, at thy pleasure, and know no continuance of rest ! Hope dawns, but no sooner does the dawn appear than, as the poet emphatically expresses it, darkness, that may be

felt, overspreads the prospect, and hope is no more ; I thought to have been perfectly happy at last ;— but that cursed resurrection has undone my repose. O woman ! woman ! or rather, O wife ! wife ! what evils does that word comprehend ? So long as women are free, they are angels, goddesses, nay, every thing, but give them your hand and they are — ; but let me forbear—

A ray of hope darts through the dismal gloom of my present situation, and prognosticates a return of happiness ; but how long that ray will continue, who knows ? perhaps, in a very short time, another resurrection shall take place, and then my happiness shall cease, and all my pleasure fly, and then my—

*Enter Mrs Spare-ribs.*

*Mrs Spare.* You are meditating, I think Mr Parson.

*Spare.* Who art thou—O thou chief ingredient in the cup of my happiness, my amiable wife, is it thee ? Yes, indeed, my sweetest, I was in profound meditation, thou knowest I am studious, a man of genius is ever—

*Mrs Spare.* But, Mr Parson, as I am certain that I have been an eye-sore, and an heart-ach to you ever since I came here, I long now to be gone : I would wish, at all times, to contribute to your pleasure, and that I can do only when I am absent.

*Spare.* And will you go away then, my dear ?

*Mrs Spare.* Yes, Sir, as I said before, in order to make you happy : Your sweet attachment to others makes your happiness rise only in proportion to my absence.

*Spare.* You are too satirical, my loveliest, believe me, you are too satirical ; how your suggestions hurt a man of my sensibility ; you do not know



me, my dear, indeed you do not know me ; your suspicions of me are very ill founded ; by Jove, my dear, they are ill founded, and prove that——

*Mrs Spare.* That you are a pious divine, and a chaste husband, I suppose——

*Spare.* By all that is sacred, if I knew——

*Mrs Spare.* But, Mr Parson, let us drop all contention at present, and let me say it once more that I long to be away.

*Spare.* Then, my dearest wife, your will be done ; but how shall I be able to bear your absence ?

*Mrs Spare.* Much as you used to do, I suppose, gallantly. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II. An Inn.

*Enter Scum and Punctual.*

*Scum.* Your servant, Sir, are you Mr Punctual, the landlord of this house ?

*Punct.* Yes, Sir, and what do you please to want with him ?

*Scum.* Nothing at all—but that my maister Spare-ribs, sent me to tell you, to send him immediately two trusty horses, your best carriage, plenty of straps and ropes, fitting for a gentleman like him, and with all these, you must be sure to send a methodist driver ; for my maister says, that he loves methodists dearly.

*Punct.* Yes, your maister loves methodists as dearly, I believe, as cats love mustard, or dogs love snuff ; their sobriety of conduct and piety of demeanour suit ill with the laxness of his sentiments, and the eccentricity of his conduct—but tell him

that I will send directly what he desires—my name is Punctual.

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III.

The Parsonage, with a Chaise at the Door.

*Mrs Spare.* Farewel, Parson, and observe my injunctions.

*Spare.* Oh, my dear, and are you gone? Unhappy I! I shall never be able to bear your absence, I shall certainly die, oh! oh!

*Mrs Spare.* Well mimicked upon my word: Dry weeping is certainly killing; a Hercules could not stand it; you must inevitably die; your end, Mr Parson, is undoubtedly nigh! I design to reside opposite to these amiable and virtuous young ladies the Misses Thoughtlesses; have you any commissions to them, my dear? I dare say they are longing to hear from you.

*Spare.* Oh, my dear, you are too severe. Farewel, and may happiness attend you wherever you go, farewell!

*Mrs Spare-ribs exit.*

*Spare-ribs, solus.*

*Spare.* Now you are gone, may I never see you more till I see you fairly interred; a perfect fury, a devil, if ever there were one upon earth. If there be a devil, which I never yet could believe, he is certainly married, makes him so often abroad; for finding no happiness at home, he is obliged to seek it where he can find it, as I have often done. Oh,

Miss —, Miss —, now shall I once more fold thee in these arms, and press thee to my longing heart.  
*Exit.*

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## A C T II.

### SCENE I. An Inn.

*Enter Spare-ribs and Punctual.*

*Punct.* Your servant, Mr Spare-ribs, I hope you are very well, I am glad to see you.

*Spare.* Your's again, Mr Punctual, I am come to settle with you for conveying away my truly amiable wife; what are your demands, Sir?

*Punct.* A mere trifle, Sir, only five shillings.—The driver I shall leave to your own generosity. I hope every thing was agreeable to your wish, I am always punctual, Mr Spare-ribs, I am always punctual.

*Spare.* Very agreeable, Mr Punctual, and as to your driver I shall *never* forget him. You have done me a good office, at this time, Mr Punctual, and to manifest my gratitude, I design to dine with you to day, and have a hearty glass afterwards. By Jove, I shall never forget your driver.

*Punct.* I am always pointed, Sir, and ready to serve gentlemen at the shortest notice.

*Spare.* Is there any company in the dining-room? I must have something to refresh my spirits, Mr Punctual; they are low, exceeding low at present; this unexpected separation has given me a severe melancholy.

**Punct.** There is only one gentleman in the dining-room, will you please to walk into another room?

**Spare.** Oh, my amiable wife! Mr Punctual, I am afraid this jaunt will indanger her health, she is the best of women.

**Punct.** I hope not, Sir, the weather is pretty favourable, and the roads tolerably good; but every one is not so punctual as I am.

**Spare.** Very true, Mr Punctual, I will never forget you; I feel—but I want words to express half the gratitude I feel for the good you have done me.

*Enter Cringe.*

**Cringe.** Dinner is on the table, Sir.

*[Scene changes to the Dining-room, and discovers Ronald McDonald taking a snuff out of a crooked horn mull.]*

**Spare.** Your servant, Sir—Pray be seated.

**Ronald.** Your servant again, Sir, and pray be you seated; for I have got a very good appetite, and would wish to fall to dinner as soon as possible—there is no parleying with an empty stomach.

**Spare.** And pray what countryman are you, Sir?

**Ronald.** From Scotland, Sir.

**Spare.** I thought so, by your damn'd uncultivated, drawling pronunciation.—And pray whither are you bound, Sir?

**Ronald.** For London, Sir.

**Spare.** O how dearly, you Scotchmen, love the road to London.

**Ronald.** Just as dearly, Sir, as fools love to discover their own ignorance, and affectation its own deformity.

**Spare.** (*aside*) A damn'd shrewd fellow this, but I will be up with him yet. I presume, Sir, that



you have crossed the Tweed with a view to preferment.

*Ronald.* Yes, Sir, such preferment as merit will allow; but, in these days, preferment is often founded not upon merit but upon caprice.

*Spare.* You Scotch are always fond of preferment, especially in England.

*Ronald.* Yes, yes, Sir, England is to Scotchmen what fat livings are to clergymen; they often make them richer, but seldom more virtuous; wealth is often an enemy to pious sentiments.

*Spare.* (*aside*;) D—n his invention, I must not proceed any further with him in the way of banter; he is too many for me.—Well, Sir, what news from the north side of the Tweed?

*Ronald.* None at all, Sir, except than an hyper-critic, and a would-be-a-wit, called Dr Johnson, has bidden adieu to this world, and gone, I suppose, to see whether the Scotchmen in the other world be any more agreeable to him than in this.

*Spare.* Ah yes, the great Dr Johnson is dead indeed! What pity that men of solid penetration should not be immortal as their fame! Dr Johnson, Sir, was the first literary genius in England, he was a constellation of learning.

*Ronald.* Yes, Sir, and I will tell you what constellation he was.

*Spare.* Name it then, Sir.

*Ronald.* The Urfa Major, Sir, the Great Bear.

*Spare.* I lament his death sincerely; how great was his fame!

*Ronald.* Now, since he is gone, whom do ye esteem your first literary genius? a man of true genius, is *rara avis in terris*, a wonder upon earth.

*Spare.* As your humble servant was generally allowed, by the best judges, to be the second to



the immortal Johnson; now, since he is gone, I presume that I have the honour of being the first; now is the time of my shining!—Have you ever read Dr Johnson's works, Sir?

*Ronald.* Yes I have, Sir, some of them with pleasure, and some with displeasure: His Rambler, Idler, and Dictionary, are pretty well written; his Dictionary is inimitable, but his Tour round the Western Islands of Scotland is a most churlish, illiberal, and scandalous production, and shows, whatever the world may think, that he was very far from being a man of generous sentiment.

*Spare.* Pray, Sir, did you ever read any of ——— works; what is your opinion of them? you seem to me to be a critic; he seems to be a man of exquisite judgment and penetration.

*Ronald.* Indeed, Sir, I am of a different opinion; he seems to me to be a man devoid of judgment, and far from being gifted with penetration. His M——— is just a rhapsody, without either meaning or sentiment, and the production of a very distempered brain. What, in the name of wonder, had he in view when he wrote it? If he had any view at all, it was certainly a bad one, to vindicate Swift in a part of his character where all the world condemns him, even those who, at other times, are his avowed admirers.

*Spare.* You are too severe, Sir, in your criticisms, you certainly do not understand him.

*Ronald.* You mistake me, Sir, I read it with the greatest attention; but finding my labour ill bestowed, I committed it to the flames that it might trouble me no more.

*Spare.* What is your opinion then of his Sermons?

*Ronald.* They are much of a piece, all rant without scope, neither religious nor moral, a chime of

well turned periods, and can please none but those who go no deeper than words, and even those are often devoid of meaning.

*Spare.* And what do you think of the rest of his works?

*Ronald.* Just what I think of those that were just now mentioned; he is neither the divine nor the poet, nay, nor the historian; be who he will, he has mistaken his talents woefully. His poem upon the Creation is just a rodomontade of nonsense, worse than even the worst of Grubstreet. His other poems are a perfect jumble of words without meaning, thrown together after the manner of Swift, such as *think, clink, wink, sink, &c.* His dedication, funeral orations, and all the remainder of his nonsensifications, are nothing but fulsome flattery, laid on with a very unskilful hand. Upon the whole, his works are trifling, dull, whimsical, and mean; and, as I am told, a perfect type of the author himself.

*Spare.* D—n your insolence, Sir; he is a gentleman in every sense of the word, Sir—brave, learned, generous, and humane, he is an honour to the English nation, Sir; nay, Sir, let me tell you, he is an honour to the whole human race.

*Ronald.* He is obliged to you, Sir; you seem to be his friend.

*Spare.* Yes, Sir, I am his friend, and to give you a just proof of it, as he is absent, I demand satisfaction of you for the injury you have done to his reputation, in thus scurrilously attacking and ridiculing not only his works, but himself; his fame is immortal, Sir, his fame is immortal!

*Ronald.* I do not doubt, Sir, but I am afraid it is either as a fool, or a mad man, or both:—However, as you demand satisfaction for the author, as

a friend, satisfaction you shall have, Sir. What satisfaction do you chuse to have? I shall be at no loss, I think, to prove my assertions.

*Spare.* An honourable satisfaction, Sir.

*Ronald.* You are a man of honour then.

*Spare.* Yes, Sir, and will maintain it at the hazard of my own life.

*Ronald.* I doubt it much, you make too much noise.—(*aside*) Well, Sir, name your satisfaction.

*Spare.* Either by sword or pistol, or both, Sir.

*Ronald.* Either by sword or pistol! A Lilliputian hero indeed! Dost thou think, that I will stoop so low as to have a formal engagement with thee? I think I should be at no loss, if thou wert at the outside of the house, to blow thee over it, with one whisper of my mouth.

*Spare.* Take that, Sir, for thy insolence, (*lending him a vigorous blow on the face*) and revile no more, thou damn'd insolent Scotch Demon!

[*Ronald, without speaking a word, takes him up in his arms, like a child, and holds his face to the fire till his eyes are ready to jump out; then sets him down on the floor, and gives him a kick on the posteriors, over he falls, cuts his face, and makes his nose spring like a fountain.*]

*Ronald.* You have satisfaction now, Sir, I hope, and a bloody one too, in the name of your friend.  
(*Ronald rings the bell*)

*Enter Cringe.*

*Ronald.* Call your master here, Sir.

*Enter Punctual.*

*Punct.* What is the matter, Sir, what is the matter t (*Seeing Spare-ribs still on the floor all blood, and hearing him groan.*)

*Ronald.* You seem, Mr Punctual, to have a nest of hornets in the neighbourhood, and one of them coming in here has been very troublesome to me, till I calmed it a little, and there it lies: I beg that you would carry it out, Mr Punctual, it raises a horrid smell; if I did not see it, I should imagine that it was not a hornet but a bug. Carry it off, carry it off, Mr Punctual; carry it off, or it will poison your house.

[*Punctual and servants drag out Spare-ribs.*]

*Ronald, solus.*

*Ronald.* This Spare-ribs is certainly ———, the merit of whose works he was so anxious to know! Good heavens! what havock do foolish vanity and empty ostentation make amongst thy works! No creature is either vain or affected but man; man, who has the greatest reason to be humble and sincere; man, whose greatest virtue is often negative, and whose greatest praise is often disgrace. This same is a priest, I dare say. Alas! alas! that education should be so often bestowed in vain, and the care of souls entrusted to such abandoned characters! Can virtue prevail when impiety takes the lead! This is an awful generation! *Exit.*



## SCENE II.

Changes to another Apartment in the Inn.

*Spare-ribs and Cringe.*

*Spare.* Oh, my head, my head, Cringe, it aches damnably.—Go immediately, Sir, and bring Cut-beard the barber to me, perhaps his lenient hand may do something to recover me.

*Cringe.* Directly, Sir; but, alas! alas! Sir, I am afraid it is beyond his power to mend your head; he may, and can mend your face, but none can mend your head, I doubt, but he that made it. You are no athiest, Sir, I hope.

*Spare.* Confound thy impertinence, thou varlet, do what I desire thee, or I will send thee directly to thy fore fathers.

*Cringe.* I go directly, Sir, and I hope you will remember me for this, as long as you promised to remember the chaise-driver, and that was forever.

*Exit.*

*Spare-ribs, solus.*

*Spare.* Damnation seize all Scotchmen! say I. I have long had a deep rooted aversion to the Scotch, though I hardly knew wherefore, but now I have more than reason. I have often heard that Scotch blood soon boils, but now I find it to my sad experience. I have always found that they are a damnable shrewd people, quick of invention and slow to contest! Oh my eyes and my head! It was certainly rash in me to resent his remarks in such a manner; for, by G—d, they were nobly made, and many of them justly founded; he is certainly a man of eminent abilities, he will shine in any station.—Oh for such coolness as he is master off!

*Enter Cutbeard.*

*Cut.* What is the matter, Sir, what is the matter that you have your head bound up?

*Spare.* Oh, my good friend, Cutbeard, I am the man that have seen afflictions; ever since I came into this world, one disaster hath come quick upon the heels of another; no sooner am I freed from one plague, than it is followed by all the plagues of Egypt.

*Cut.* What is the matter, Sir?

*Spare.* A few weeks ago I lived in happiness, free from trouble, free from care; but, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, I was rendered miserable by the resurrection and arrival of a wife, whom I thought in the shades below conversing with her dear sister Xantippe, that famous matron of old, who always loved to humour her husband.

*Cut.* Now she is gone, Sir, as I am informed.

*Spare.* Yes, Sir, but what of that? I have fallen into the hands of the Philistines. A damn'd Scotchman has almost roasted out both my eyes, and ruined my posteriors; I cannot sit upright yet, and, I believe, it will be some days before I shall be able. Oh, for the strength of a Sampson, Cutbeard, that I might pull down the house about his ears, if he were within it, I would willingly meet with Sampson's fate to be revenged upon the confounded villain—revenge is sweet to the valiant and the brave!—I shall never engage with a Scotchman again so long as I live; they are loaded muskets, Cutbeard, that will go off, and kill directly, if not cautiously handled. From all Scotchmen good Lord deliver me, is my earnest prayer.

*Cut.* And mine too, Sir. I love them not. I am sorry, Sir, that you have been so unfortunate.

*Spare.* But, my good friend, Cutbeard, you know that you are privy to all my amorous proceedings, I intrust every thing to you.

*Cut.* You safely may, Sir, I shall never abuse your confidence to my latest breath.

*Spare.* Well, Cutbeard, I design, with your approbation, to recal the dear little angel Miss —, I long now for her ecstatic company and conversation. O, my eyes! my eyes!

*Cut.* You may, Sir, but the people, Sir—and you are a priest——

*Spare.* D—n the people, what are the people to me? my fame is established, and my character is far above their sordid reach; I value them not, Sir, I value them not—with the old Roman poet, *Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*, Let all the people go be damn'd; I hate them.

*Cut.* Well, Sir, but if these things were so to happen, that she should—I beg your pardon, Sir, perhaps I make too free.—I say, if things were so to happen that she should turn pregnant, then——

*Spare.* A superexcellent hint, by G—d.—I never attended to that.—Oh, my friend, a cordial embrace; I always had a good opinion of your friendship and ingenuity, but now I have a proof positive. You know, my good friend, that it is positively said, and positively affirmed, by the public, that she is married; and send her to London, to her husband for a short time, and then, at her return, one safely may——

*Cut.* Very safely, Sir, one may do what they please, without hazarding either his reputation or his vicarage, ha, ha, ha, I think we have made it out between us, Mr Parson.

*Spare.* Bravo! two heads are always better than one, ha, ha, ha,—But come, my better genius, let

us crack a bottle before we part ; it is wine that makes the heart to sing.

*Cut.* I sing always when I am drunk, Sir.—  
Fal, la, de ral.

*Spare.* I think you can sing, Cutbeard ; you are gifted with an excellent pipe.

*Cut.* Yes, Sir, although I say it myself, I'll sing with any in England.

*Spare.* Then you must indulge us with a song, to cheer my spirits ; my eyes and my posteriors still torment me.

*Cut.* That I will, Sir.

*Spare.* But first take another glass, and then—

*Cut.* (*he drinks*) Now, Sir, I will give you a song, which I lately heard ; I think it is not altogether destitute of humour—but let it speak for itself, you are a judge, Sir. (*He sings*)

## S O N G.

*Air. The Lads of the Mill for me.*

Let gloomy divines harangue as they will,  
And damn all the pleasures of earth ;  
By their pious leaves, it's woman that still  
To all our pleasures gives birth.  
Tho' earth's whole domain to Adam was given,  
Nor joy nor pleasure he found ;  
Till blest'd with the sweets of a woman, by heav'n,  
And then all his blessings were crown'd.  
*Tho' earth's whole domain, &c.*

He who is averse to the pleasures of sense,  
And shuns the transporting embrace ;  
Let him, like a Nebuchadnezzar, go hence,  
And live with the beasts of the chace.



When the mind is oppress'd with trouble or care,  
 Nor power, nay, nor riches can cheer :  
 Or give such delight as a sweet yielding fair,  
 Her favours are ecstacy here.

*When the mind, &c.*

*Spare.* Bravo, Cutbeard, bravo ! the song abounds with humour, and it is emphatically well sung. You deserve the stage, Sir, you deserve the stage ; and if my interest, when I go to London, can bring you upon it, you may depend upon my best endeavours ; and my interest there, I can assure you, it is very great. I am a man of genius, Mr Cutbeard, I am a man of taste.

*Cut.* That you are, Sir, and I thank you for the very obliging offer you have made me, but I would rather choose to follow my own employment at home : Players and stage fingers are a set of mortals that, though they meet with general encouragement, yet they are very far from being generally beloved.

*Spare.* Well, Mr Cutbeard, your will is your kingdom, and, since you reject my offer, in that respect, command my service in any other and it is at your devotion ; it is a pleasure to a noble mind to be beneficent ; I am never so happy as when I am doing good to others, it is the joy and the delight of my soul !

*Cut.* I thank you, Sir, I thank you indeed ; you are more than kind.

*Spare.* Take another glass then, to moisten your throat after singing ; and since you have been so kind as to indulge me with a song, and an exquisite one too, I will return the favour with one of my own composing ; you know I am a poet, Mr Cutbeard.

*Cut.* That I do, Sir, and a mortal one too, as

Mr Concordance the Schoolmaster says, and he is a very good judge.

*Spare.* Yes, Sir, my fame shall live while year succeeds to year, and time rolls on its course. But attend, Mr Cutbeard, to the song.

*Cut.* I am all attention, Sir.

*Spare.* The ladies used to say, that I had a fine voice.  
(*He sings*)

## S O N G.

*Air. The Banks of the Tweed*

When bless'd with the smiles of sweet —,  
I envy not kings of their sway;  
Each moment has transports in store,  
Celestially sweet in display.  
A fig for the glare of a king,  
The trophies of state I despise,  
There's nought but sweet —, that can bring  
The trophies that wisdom would prize.

Let pride and ambition attain  
Each favour that Fortune bestows,  
The greatest of power I disdain,  
From — all my happiness flows.  
Let misers, encircled with gold,  
Transportingly gaze on its charms;  
My bliss is complete when I fold  
The truly sweet — in my arms.

*Cut.* Excellently well sung indeed, Sir; the song is worthy of the subject, and the subject is worthy of the song; they are both inimitable in their kind. No wonder the ladies gave you praise.

*Spare.* Take another glass, Mr Cutbeard, and here is my service to you. *(Drinking)*

*Cut.* And your's again, Sir, very humbly, not forgetting the subject of the song—she is a sweet creature.

*Spare.* She is indeed—nothing can exceed—she is an angel upon earth.

*Enter Cringe.*

*Cringe.* You are wanted, Mr Cutbeard, if you please.

*Cut.* As I have some serious business to transact, I hope you will excuse me, Sir!

*Spare.* Most certainly, my good friend, Mr Cutbeard, but mind my injunction. Send the sweet little angel to London directly, and then, after her return, happiness shall reign and bumpers go round. Farewel.

*Cut.* Depend upon it, Sir. *Exit singing*

## S O N G.

*Air. Whistle o'er the leave o' it.*

Soon may, your Goblets nobly crown'd,  
Your flowing bumpers circle round;  
And all your friends in mirth abound,  
To hail sweet — returned.

That night shall be to mirth assign'd,  
And pleasures of the softest kind,  
And those who are not thus inclin'd,  
Let them go hence unmourn'd!

*Spare-ribs, solus.*

*Spare.* An arch fellow indeed! Were I but as happy as he wishes me, I would laugh at all the emoluments of a crown, but capricious Fortune wheels me round; now I am mounted aloft to the summit of all my wishes, and now I am tumbled head-long to the ground! Ye gods, what a cajoled, thwarted, and disappointed creature is man; he surely existed long before this world had a being, and was sent hither to suffer for his egregious crimes; he sees and he wishes, but what he wishes, often no industry can procure. Tantalus, in the fable, is often not more miserable than we; the evil we wish to avoid is always present, but the good we desire we seldom can attain. O Reason, Reason, what a dance dost thou often lead us!—thou holdest out the faint glimmerings of thy light, and we implicitly follow wherever thou callest, till often we fall head-long into the ditch; and, in place of returning, as we expected, crowned with the gifts of happiness, we often return the wretched slaves of mortification and pain! Nature is the mode. He who follows nature can never be unhappy.

- " Reason, however able, cool at best,
- " Cares not for service, or but serves when press'd,
- " Stays till we call, and then not often near,
- " But honest instinct comes a volunteer;
- " Sure by quick nature happiness to gain,
- " Which heavier reason labours at in vain."

POPE.

Be gone, Reason, and dwell in the gloom of the cottage, or with the hermit in his cell; I worship thee no more. Come, Nature, inspire me with all thy majesty, and let me emphatically feel thy sway: early I was thy devotee, and all my of-

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ferings smoked only upon thy altar : I always was a lover of thee and thy operations ; and I never enjoyed such felicity as when my conduct was regulated by thy heavenly dictates. Thou knowest that I always loved *company*, especially the company of those whom I found to be thy sincere worshippers, and that is agreeable to thee ; for man is naturally a sociable, or, according to philosophers, a gregarious animal, prone to associate and averse to solitude. A *bottle*, too, I love, and that likewise is natural, for it cheers the heart and elevates the soul. In fine, I love the *fair sex*, and that is also natural ; for certainly they were intended to be loved and careffed, or why so lovingly sweet ? What though I have a wife, universal regard is a virtue : Did Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, &c. &c. those men of glorious memory, ever confine themselves to one woman ? No, they were men of rank and spirit, governors of kingdoms, and governors of nations, the mighty of the earth, far above the reach of ignorant caprice, and vulgar control.

“ They knew what’s what, and that’s as high  
“ As metaphysic wit can fly.”

HUDIBRAS.

Then while nature can dictate, I shall obey and worship no other power : her will is mine, and this very evening I shall wait upon the amiable Miss —, and spend a sweet night in her arms.

*Exit singing.*

S O N G.

*Air. My wife has ta'en the gee ; or, I care for  
no body, no not I, since no body cares for me.*

I come, thou source of pleasure,  
Upon the wings of love ;  
Thy favours are a treasure  
That might enrich a Jove.

THE END.



